



SMALLPOX FACT SHEET

Who Should **NOT** Receive the Smallpox Vaccine? (Unless they are Exposed to the Smallpox Virus)

- Expectant mothers?
- People with eczema or atopic dermatitis?
- People being treated for cancer?
- People who are HIV-positive?
- People who have had an organ transplant?

ANSWER: All of the above.

Here's why

Some people are at greater risk for serious side effects from the smallpox vaccine. **Individuals who have any of the following conditions, or live with someone who does, should NOT get the smallpox vaccine unless they have been exposed to the smallpox virus.** Higher risk conditions are:

- Eczema or atopic dermatitis. (This is true even if the condition is not currently active, mild or experienced as a child.)
- Skin conditions such as burns, chickenpox, shingles, impetigo, herpes, severe acne, or psoriasis. (People with any of these conditions should not get the vaccine until they have completely healed.)
- Weakened immune system. (Cancer treatment, an organ transplant, HIV, or medications to treat autoimmune disorders and other illnesses can weaken the immune system.)
- Pregnancy or plans to become pregnant within one month of vaccination.

In addition, individuals should not get the smallpox vaccine if they:

- Are allergic to the vaccine or any of its ingredients.
- Are less than 18 years of age.
- Have a moderate or severe short-term illness. (These people should wait until they are completely recovered to get the vaccine.)
- Are currently breastfeeding.

Again, people who have been directly exposed to the smallpox virus should get the vaccine, regardless of their health status.

Don't Hesitate!

If offered the smallpox vaccine, individuals should tell their immunization provider if they have any of the above conditions, or even if they suspect they might.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/smallpox, or call the CDC public response hotline at (888) 246-2675 (English), (888) 246-2857 (Español), or (866) 874-2646 (TTY)
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